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Summarized translation of a supplementary decree issued by the municipality of Buenos Aires, December 11, 1908, regarding the hygienization of milk.

Establishments where milk is hygienically treated must have all openings in the walls covered by wire screens to prevent the entrance of insects.

No product is to be sold unless it has been previously inspected by the sanitary authorities, and the ordinance regarding temperature, etc., complied with.

Whenever it shall be deemed necessary, the sanitary department will take samples of the milk for the purpose of analysis. Milk arriving at railway stations is also to be inspected.

A monthly return of the analyses of milk is to include the daily grade of acidity, butter, density, impurities, etc., and is to be sent to the sanitary department; and a record of such analyses to be kept, to be ready, at all times, for the inspection of municipal employees.

Milk with an acidity below 16° or above 20° (Bornic) shall not be allowed to be pasteurized.

THE SANITATION OF ROTTERDAM.

By R. A. C. WOLLENBERG, Assistant Surgeon, United States Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

The prompt suppression of the recent cholera outbreak in the city of Rotterdam has furnished an eloquent instance of the value of an excellent municipal sanitary administration. The city abounding with innumerable canals and a great floating population, both contributing to the difficulty of fighting the spread of the disease, the first being subject to contamination by the second, the latter habitually and unnecessarily depending on the first for water supply, has given an object lesson of what can be done by good sanitary laws and their vigorous enforcement.

The first cases of cholera appeared August 20; the city was declared free of the disease September 11, there having been a total of 34 cases and 15 deaths. The disease was not confined to a limited area, but appeared in all parts of the city, mostly along the waterways.

Few new sanitary measures were instituted during the course of the outbreak. Aside from the prosecution of general regulations and the plans already established in anticipation of such an emergency, very little was done. Most important, however, was compelling the river men to use filtered water.

An investigation of the work of the department of public sanitation and disinfection was afforded me through the courtesy of the director, who superintends street cleaning and sprinkling, snow removal, disposal of sewage, cleaning of sewers, collecting and disposal of excreta and waste from outlying districts, collecting and disposing of manure and garbage, operating of public privies and urinals, dredging and cleaning of canals, and all public disinfection. The working force of the department consists of about 750 men.

To the excellent administration and work of this department may be attributed a great measure of the success of the campaign against cholera. The department naturally works hand in hand with the health bureau and the water board. That the death rate of the city of Rotterdam has fallen in the last twenty-five years from 25 to about 12.5 is largely the result of the system, that in thoroughness and in many other features is deserving of imitation.

Street cleaning and sprinkling.—The street area under the service of the cleaning division has quadrupled since 1882. In December, 1908, it amounted to 3,028,859 square meters, and had a length of 214,065 meters. The cost of cleaning has comparatively lessened in late years on account of the greater facility of working on improved pavements, which now consist chiefly of small stone blocks or asphalt. Cleaning is generally done during the daytime, excepting in the center of the city, where, on account of large traffic, it is done during the night or early morning hours. In preparation for Sundays and holidays, the work is done during the previous night. Wherever possible the street accumulations are swept away by means of revolving squeegees attached to sprinkling wagons, the operation being quite dustless. The machine is preceded by men who loosen all dirt that may be packed. Odors of vegetable and stock markets are removed by adding to the water of the sprinkling wagons a quantity of creolin. Where the squeegee can not be used to advantage, a machine of the type of the American sweeper is employed. The machines are accompanied by a squad of broom men who dump the collections into covered carts. These convey all the refuse to the garbage-collecting stations, where they are disposed of as hereinafter described. For the prevention of street dust, sprinkling is done with hose in addition to that done by the machines.

Snow removal.—Recourse to snow plows is not often necessary, there being but little heavy snowfall in Rotterdam. Ordinarily only the sweepers are employed.

Disposal of garbage and ashes.—Garbage, manure, and other waste matter, as ashes, rubbish, etc., are collected three times weekly during the forenoons. In houses the garbage and waste is collected in covered cans or boxes. It is removed by covered wagons to the nearest one of the seven dumping stations, consisting of clean, well-kept, closed buildings, where the accumulations are picked over. Rubbish of value, like paper, rags, old leather, tin, wood, etc., is sold and is a source of considerable revenue. Ashes and valueless material, after wetting, are used to fill in land. Manure and anything which may be of value as fertilizer is delivered to farmers. What remains is burned at a crematory outside the city.

A new reduction plant is now in the process of erection and will be in working order in two years, with a capacity of 450 tons daily. All gases will be consumed. All collected garbage will be disposed of within twenty-four hours, and there will be no accumulation, with the accompanying decomposition. It is expected that the plant will return about 33 per cent of the running expenses by furnishing the city with a certain amount of electricity. The resulting clinker is to be mixed with cement and will be used for sidewalk material.

Sewage disposal.—Rotterdam is supplied with good sewers. The city, lying from 1.5 to 2.5 meters below the level of the Maas River, five 250 horsepower steam pumps are necessary to convey the sewage from the main sewers to the river. The sewers are cleaned by simply flushing them with river water at its own pressure.

Water supply.—At low tide the stream has a downward current of 1.5 meters per minute. The reservoirs are filled only after one hour of downward flow. The water of the reservoirs is always relatively clean. The filtration plant is 31 years old, is supplied with a bacteriological laboratory, and is stated to have a bacterial efficiency between 99.7 and 99.9 per cent.

Canals.—All city canals are kept clean by picking up with nets all scum and floating matter.

Public disinfection.—All public disinfection is done in two plants which employ about 40 persons. These steam plants supplement the ordinary house disinfection, the whole work being done free of cost. In fact, anything is disinfected on requests of physicians. Formalin is preferably used for house disinfection, which is followed by a mechanical cleaning at which disinfecting solutions are also employed. Articles such as clothing or bedding are removed in zinc lined, closed carts. Since 1905 all houses have been disinfected after deaths from tuberculosis. Persons employed at this work are uniformed while on duty, are covered with gowns while handling infected articles, and change all their apparel after finishing their day's work. Uniforms and gowns are regularly disinfected and remain at the station.

For disinfection of vessels a barge is used, which may be towed anywhere about the harbor as necessary. It is supplied with steam chamber, baths, and an apparatus for the destruction of vermin on board.

Special measures against typhoid fever.—In the homes of patients are placed cans for the collection of all discharges and wash water. To the contents of these cans is added creolin. The contents are then buried. Creolin for use in the houses is supplied free of cost. Clothing and bedding is disinfected in a steam chamber.

Typhoid patients, also those suffering from scarlet fever or diphtheria, in the households of dairymen, milk sellers, or sellers of eatables are isolated; if proper isolation is not possible, the sufferers are treated in a hospital. Houses, clothing of contacts, and milk utensils are disinfected, and the sale of suspected milk or food is prohibited.

Scarlet fever and diphtheria.—Houses having cases of either are placarded, and, if necessary, guards are stationed for the enforcement of quarantine. Schoolrooms and schoolbooks are disinfected after discovery of cases among pupils.

Smallpox.—Sufferers are treated in contagious disease barracks. Their quarters are disinfected, and all contacts are vaccinated and held under observation two weeks in special barracks. Vaccination is compulsory in the city.

Plague and cholera.—Ships from plague-infected ports are searched for rats. These are subjected to examination, but in the year 1908 no infection was found.

Since September, 1908, all vessels from cholera-infected Russian ports, after government quarantine at the Hook of Holland, are taken in hand by the Rotterdam disinfection service. All drinking-water tanks and ballast tanks on board are sealed in order to prevent discharge into local water, and the seals, as well as all persons on board, are given a daily inspection. In case that water has to be emptied, the vessel is taken to sea under guard. Water before being emptied is chemically disinfected. No infection has ever been found, however, though the water is always bacteriologically examined.

Sterile bottles and spoons in a special carrier have been kept for the past year at all police stations, and are available to physicians for the purpose of collecting discharges from those ill with symptoms of cholera. The specimens are then quickly dispatched by the police to the government laboratory for examination.